

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ALGIER 03654 231210Z

22 10

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 OMB-01 IO-10 SAB-01 SAM-01 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 SCCT-01 EB-07 /090 W

----- 004947

O 231130Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3554

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TUNIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY VIENNA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DOHA IMMEDIATE

CINCEUR IMMEDIATE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ALGIERS 3654

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, XF, ASEC, OPEC, AG

SUBJ: KIDNAPPED OPEC MINISTERS

DEPARTMENT PASS BAGHDAD

1. AS NEWS SERVICES HAVE REPORTED, AUSTRIAN AIRCRAFT WITH
KIDNAPPED OPEC MINISTERS RETURNED ALGIERS EARLY THIS MORNING

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(SHORTLY AFTER THREE O'CLOCK) FROM TRIPOLI AND FOLLOWING

NEGOTIATIONS WITH ALGERIAN AUTHORITIES, HIGHJACKERS SURRENDERED THEMSELVES AND THEIR HOSTAGES. ALGERIAN MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND ENERGY ABDESSELAM, WHO HAD VOLUNTEERED TO LEAVE WITH OTHER HOSTAGES LAST NIGHT WHEN PLANE TOOK OFF FOR TRIPOLI, REMAINED IN LIBYA WITH LIBYAN MINISTER OF PETROLEUM MABRUK.

2. AT THIS POINT WE HAVE FEW DETAILS ON IDENTITY AND AIMS OF HIGHJACKERS. LAST NIGHT PRESIDENTIAL COUNSELOR HAMDANI TOLD ME ALGERIA DID NOT REALLY KNOW WHAT HIGHJACKERS WANTED, BUT FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTEFLIKA IN COMMENT TO NEWSMEN SAID THEY NOT FAR FROM TRUTH IN SPECULATING THAT HIGHJACKERS HAD WANTED MAKE TOUR OF ARAB CAPITALS. WE ASSUME THEIR INTENTION WAS TO PUBLICIZE THEIR CONTENTION THAT ANY MOVE TOWARD SETTLEMENT WHICH WOULD RECOGNIZE EXISTENCE OF ISRAEL WAS TREASON TO ARAB CAUSE. A LONG COMMUNIQUE TO THIS EFFECT WAS READ ON ALGERIAN RADIO AND TV LAST NIGHT. COMMUNIQUE WAS FULL OF ACCUSATIONS ABOUT AMERICAN IMPERIALISM WHICH WERE TAKEN OUT OF THIS MORNINGS PRESS VERSIONS.

3. EXHAUSTED CREW OF AUSTRIAN AIRCRAFT NOW SLEEPING OFF EFFECTS OF 26 HOUR ORDEAL AT RESIDENCE OF AUSTRIAN AMBASSADOR. LATTER TELLS ME THAT LEADING TERRORIST WAS TALL MAN WITH BIGGISH FACE AND LARGE NOSE WHO CALLED HIMSELF CARLOS. CREW OF AIRCRAFT REPORTS HE SPOKE ENGLISH WITH WHAT THEY THOUGHT WAS LATIN ACCENT AND THEY SPECULATE HE WAS SOUTH AMERICAN. THEY SAID HE WAS TALKATIVE, DID A GREAT DEAL OF GESTURING BUT OBVIOUSLY WAS A PROFESSIONAL WHO KNEW WHAT HE WAS DOING. WHETHER HE IS THE NOTORIOUS VENEZUELAN TERRORIST REMAINS TO BE DETERMINED, HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO AUSTRIAN.

4. ALGERIANS HAVE MADE MUCH OF FACT THEY AGREED TO RECEIVE HIJACKERS ONLY IN INTEREST OF HUMANITARIANISM AND THAT ALGERIA NOT A TARGET OF THIS OPERATION. AUSTRIAN AMBASSADOR DESCRIBES ALGERIAN HANDLING OF INCIDENT AT AIRPORT AS BEING VERY COOL, RELAXED AND EFFICIENT. THERE WAS MINIMUM DISPLAY OF FORCE AND AFFAIR WAS TREATED VERY CALMLY. NEWS-PAPERMAN PRESENT AT AIRPORT FOR MOST OF DAY REPORTS THAT BOUTEFLIKA WAS OBVIOUSLY RUNNING THE OPERATION FROM THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ALGERIAN SIDE. MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND PETROLEUM ABDESSELAM, MINISTER OF INTERIOR ABDELGHANI AND DIRECTOR OF SURETE DRAIA, WHO ALSO PRESENT, OBVIOUSLY PLAYING MINIMAL ROLES. BOUTEFLIKA APPARENTLY DID GOOD DEAL BOLSTERING OF HIS OWN REPUTATION BY MASTERFUL PERFORMANCE WITH HIJACKERS AND WITH PRESS.

5. WE WILL REPORT FURTHER IF WE CAN DEVELOP ANY POSITIVE

INFORMATION REGARDING IDENTITY KIDNAPPERS.

6. SINCE WRITING ABOVE HAVE TALKED TO ABERKANE AT FOREIGN
MINISTRY. HE SAYS ALGERIANS DO NOT YET KNOW IDENTITY OF
HIJACKERS. HE DID SAY, HOWEVER, THAT PURPOSE THEIR STUNT
WAS TO PUBLICIZE COMMUNIQUE WHICH BROADCAST OVER RADIO LAST
NIGHT.
PARKER

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED TO BAGHDAD.

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